GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5323
ANSWERED ON:29.04.2005
HEALTH STUDY OF WORKERS OF ASBESTOS MINING
Bishnoi Shri Jaswant Singh

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Mines Bureau has conducted study regarding the impact on the health of labourers engaged in asbestos mining;

(b) if so, the findings of the study;

(c) whether any recommendation has been made in the study to remove the ban imposed on mining of asbestos;

(d) whether the Government proposes to implement these recommendations and remove the ban on leases of asbestos mining; and

(e) if so, the time by which these recommendations are proposed to be implemented?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO)

(a) to (c): In 1998, Ministry of Mines had approved a S&T Project titled ` Study of Pollution Level in Asbestos Mines and processing plants in Rajasthan` to be undertaken by Indian Bureau of Mines(IBM), a subordinate office of the Ministry to assess the feasibility of lifting the ban on expansion of asbestos mining through a scientific study of pollution level in asbestos mines and processing plants in Rajasthan and in Andhra Pradesh and to suggest appropriate mitigation measures. The Study recommended that the ban imposed on grant and renewal of mining leases and expansion of mining may be lifted subject to control of pollution level in work environment of various operations and other remedial measures.

(d) & (e): Recommendations of the Study have been examined in consultation with all Stake holders. Some stake holders have suggested that asbestos mining can be permitted with appropriate safeguards. IBM in consultation with Central Pollution Control Board has been asked to work out these safeguards. At present the ban on mining of asbestos has not been lifted.